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STAVES

OF THE

TRIPLE ALLIANCE,

BY

ST. JAMES CUMMINGS.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR,
CHARLESTON, S. C.
1898.





"Now abideth Faith, Hope, Love, these Three."

898
no 40526

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33

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To R. G. C.

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ONE WOMAN.

A marvel and a joy, an inspiration,
The cheer of others, she is my elation.

Despite the cadence of ambitious passion,
Not as a poet would I glorify her;
Yet were I crowned, my brows should not deny
her

My wreath of laurel, but in sweeter fashion
To own the votive plaudits, she might wear it,
And I should more than crowned be to share it.

Not as a painter do I hope to save her
A witness of the face that fortune gave her.

Yet if the shades of night, the glow of morn-
ing,
Came to my touch I should delight to hold them
About her as a veil, just to unfold them,
And find her rarer than the rare adorning.
They that have pictures have no portrait of her.
Flowers at her feet forget the sky above her.

It would be rapture with a master's singing
To voice the magic from her bright eyes springing.

But oh, the jest! To hear her follow after
With joyance of her own, or doleful ditty,
Would tax the heart for gladness or for pity—
The master's grace poor prelude to her laughter.
Her melody no diapason matches;
The winds and I are rivals for her catches.

Not as a lover would I sigh to woo her,
 Nor wait, nor watch, with crosses to beshrew
 her.

But if the charms of bleak and sunny weather,
 If absence and its wonder of a meeting,
 Made bloom a fruit, and every crab a sweeting,

And all this life a song to sing together—
 As man, not master, would I seek to bind her,
 And in my heart the blind and deaf might find
 her.

AFTER THE MUSIC.

Let her sing and sing again,
 Let her blush and pale and sigh—
 Stop the melody, and then,
 Through sweet echoes fade and die,
 When the loving praise is said,
 Silence of her lips is sweet:
 Twine ye roses for her head,
 Strew ye violets for her feet.

Hidden in the song she sings,
 Who hath sight prepared to see
 Wondrous virgin visionings
 Of her heart that swells the glee?
 When she turns her smiling eyes,
 Who hath subtle ears to hear
 Rare and secret harmonies
 For this face that he is near?

AS YET.

As yet I love my lady for the praising,
 I live in wonder on her beauty gazing,
 I breathe but music listening to her voice,
 And silent I rejoice.
 My thought is but the echo of her grace,
 The picture of her face.

My lady hath dear wishes without number,
 All safe as dreams that nestle in her slumber.
 But hidden in the light that fills her eyes,
 Sweeter than her replies,
 There lies the beauteous secret of her heart,
 In which I have no part.

For passing eyes that have a care to see it,
 Fair is my lady's face, yet fairer be it,
 What summer hides beneath her bosom's
 snow,
 No vagrant eyes may know.
 Rapt eyes of mine the miracle await:
 The elf-light cometh late.

My praise of her foresees no proper ending.
 My breath for her is but a tuneful spending.
 And as a whisper from between her lips
 Almost in silence slips,
 So from between my rosy thoughts of praise
 Perfume of love I'll raise.

LINES TO B—.

Upon a quarry's verge a sculptor stood, '
 And looked and thought—I know not what
 he thought:

For from the massive marble rare and rude
 Few symbols of his secrets he had wrought.
 He had no other language for his best
 Than chiselled stone. Alas, the unexpressed!

A lover looked into his lady's eyes
 Looked on and loved—who knoweth what he
 dreamed?

Of the pure household in the farthest skies'
 He saw a hostage in the bride she seemed.
 Pray what had she to prove his vision true?
 Or he to tell her of the love he knew?

I saw a master patiently attend
 A pupil's search for music o'er the keys.
 He, tender soul and eager, at the end
 Struck the brave chords and true, the child
 to please.

For the sweet blind journey o'er melodious ways
 Each other's eyes and silence were the praise.

The lone astronomer upturned his glass,
 And looked and wandered o'er that upper
 deep;—

But 'mid the motion, and the void, the mass,
 What lease of lands had he to give or keep?
 He crossed the blue, still inches star to star,
 And caught not even a whisper from afar.

Oh, riches vast, of soul and earth and sky,
 Nor given or lost, but kept 'twixt heart and
 heart.
 They in eternity do lie, will lie,
 And Life, dear Life, thou but a babbler art.
 Hail to the time when I may sing and hear
 Truth echoing back through all hearts to my ear.

HOW LONG'S A MILE ?

How many paces, think you, make a mile,
 When jaunty feet go merrily down the way?
 And if mayhap a body meet a smile
 How many hours do make a summer's day?

When fond gallant doth move in beauty's wake,
 How soon may sunset steal the afternoon ?
 What makes one path the happiest course to take?
 And why so short, if dark come late or soon?

I've seen a quarter-mile of common clay
 Made bright as gold by steps that beat with
 mirth—
 Melodious measuring that sent the day
 Amazed and glorious from the echoing earth.

I've caught a smile from one fair face that
 turned
 To see the prime star pierce the radiant west,
 When lo! the day came back, and memory
 burned
 Through morn and noon again: but eve seem-
 ed best.

How long's a mile? In truth I do not know:
 When love's in sight, what care I for the miles?
 The hours I fear; for when she comes they go—
 Are fleet as light when love is kind and smiles.

TO LITTLE MADGE.

If I could see the stars of heaven shine down
 Just as you see them now with wondering eyes,
 If I could ever find a little town
 Peopled with beings of your sweet surmise;
 In that small town and under those great stars
 One night I'd spend, and leave my best of
 dreams,
 Just to defy the taunting, bolted bars
 That hedge green pastures and old babbling
 streams.
 With heart content there would I rest and play
 That I was neighbor to the angels too;
 That my fleet years along the shining way
 Caroled in bird-like joy, as yours for you.
 The deeds of day would make a fairy tale,
 And gather magic in the fading light.
 Though ghosts might hover round with visage
 pale,
 I'd hear the angels singing in the night.
 When drooping lids shut out the starry spell,
 My radiant thoughts in their own heaven
 would beam;
 And only he who giveth sleep could tell
 Which was the waking vision, which the dream.

I know you wonder why I say one night.
 Poor gypsy that the soul is—don't you see,
 I'd be a rover when the day brought light?
 Longing and leaving is our destiny.

LOVE: PRISONER AND KING.

When I was fast imprisoned in Love's deep heart,
 I dreaded not duress throughout my years,
 Had no regret for outlook, no poor fears
 Of silence, loss, or smart.

But rather like a king who must abide
 At home, and pass his days in his domain,
 I felt the boundaries with a sweet disdain
 Of deserts void outside.

I had assurance thousands now would come
 In wonder to my capital, and praise
 The things they saw; and poets' goodly lays
 Would swell the city's hum.

'Tis even so: by highways from afar
 In happy state am I here visited.
 Through tireless crowds from year to year is led
 My bright triumphal car.

And everything of worth the great world round
 Doth offer me a share to keep or give;
 Rare tokens of the dead and those who live,
 My love hath sought and found.

Sweeter than all, Love finds me deeds to do
 For other lives, and I grow hopeful then,
 Sometime with her to see my fellow men
 All loving, glad, and true.

This love hath done: I am her prisoner.
 Ambassadors from heaven her soul invites.
 She will not stay me with this world's delights,
 If I rejoice with her.

Mirrored in her this new life seems so good,
 Lived otherwise 'twere foreign now to me.
 I never knew before the soul might be
 So little understood.

Humble I am—Love prompts so many prayers,
 Mighty am I—Love bears me boundless trust:
 A king, familiar with the great and just,
 A man, with simple cares.

How many roads should I have had to go
 Long years to seek what now comes home to me:
 Were I not caught, or were escaped and free,
 Love's chains no more to know.

A WEDDING ODE.

It is a summer wedding by the silver sea,
 A tide of joy set in for years to be,
 Love's flower-bedecked pavilion on the shining
 shore
 With musical enchantment sounding evermore.

There be Nereids gathering where the ocean
 breaks and foams,
 There be fairies tripping from their dim, dell-
 hidden homes,
 And moonlight shimmering,
 And starlight glimmering;
 For hope is nesting in the heart of June again,
 With all the merry world in tune again,
 And ecstasy a-crowning like a rainbow sky
 The eve of blessing, every cloud gone by.

What ho! ye purple dolphins of the deep,
 Turn yet again, and flash a richer hue,
 The billows' buoyant arches cleaving,
 And lace of spray with threads of elf-light weav-
 ing—
 Speed ye with wilder passion through the blue,
 Ere all this fair rejoicing lull in sleep.
 Ye butterflies enticed from dewy garden beds,
 Welcome! and waver o'er this maze of beaute-
 ous heads,
 In glowing joyance basking
 Where brave heart for the asking
 Hath won the goal, Dame Fortune's sunny
 pleasure,
 And to a rhythmic measure,
 Here at the close,
 With his fair lady down dream vistas goes.

So join us, butterflies,
 Young Psyche's favors in disguise.
 From room to room go fluttering in the light,
 Signal your fellow legions here to-night,

And let us have a cloud of Summer joys,
 Like winged leaves on heavenly breezes sent,
 Symbols of pure, immortal souls' content—
 In spite of Time, who quietly destroys
 Moment on moment as they stream along.

Heard ye that echoing fragment of a song
 Swept o'er the eager murmuring of the throng?
 It was a vestal sigh of fond farewell

From some rapt bride's-maid, who could tell
 What budding spring-time hopes do flower to-
 night.

But ah, a tear-drop flashing in the light
 Dissolves the shadowy fancies into dew,
 And laughter rises from the heart anew;
 For gladness is sweet virtue's Paradise

To which the heart comes back.
 Open, O gentle maid, those dreaming eyes;
 Let not a spirit bounty lack,
 While joy is harvesting the golden cheer—
 Thou pensive gleaner, each one hath his year.

Look out, look out, and see
 The very heavens do canopy
 With loftier amplitude the festal scene.
 Bring out the bride, the lovely bride!
 Glad, beautiful, of radiant face,
 Her sovereign lord beside.
 We crave the midnight's parting grace
 To crown her with the starlight's matchless
 sheen.

Chaste Dian hies apace for such as she.
 Behold the magic halo on her hair!
 Hear the soft cadence of the outer sea—
 The flowers 'mid the grasses at her feet
 Flooding a sea of perfume through the air—
 For thought is sweet, and life is sweet,
 And earth for love is meet, and oh, so fair!

O bride beloved, heaven is arching o'er thee,
 And thy dear choice is proud and strong beside
 thee;
 Thou hast the land and sea, and happy days
 before thee,
 May never thorn or wave or storm-cloud ill
 betide thee.

But see that faintest changing in the East—
 Some thought of mottling, while the stars
 grow pale.

Must love from her gay chorus be released?
 Away! away! 'twill soon be break of day.
 Away! away! we must no longer stay.
 Sweet wishes do we leave behind;
 But let us hold her still in mind,
 For life is blest if thought is kind.
 Away! before the morrow full is born.
 It is the bridegroom's part
 To shut her in his heart,
 That she with him may wake,
 And wondering vision take
 Of that first day, that dawn supreme,
 With love-light added to the rosy, golden
 gleam,
 The glory of the morn.

LITTLE OPOPANAX.

Oh, the luckless little fellow,
In my pathway, green and yellow.
Who would think him dying,
With his bright head lying
Cushioned in the dust?
Die he must.

Would I had some dewy clover,
With its breath to tide him over
Just one sweet hour's dreaming--
He a cloudlet streaming
In a sunny sky
Ere he die.

Oh, for butterflies to fan him,
Ere the coming darkness ban him
From sweet pity's sight,
Lonely in the night.
Not a kind wing flies
Where he lies.

Would I had the bees to nurse him,
And their litany rehearse him.
Cosy they are dozing,
While his life is closing,
Life for them is sweet.
Life is fleet.

When the light heart comes to sorrow,
 Friends are off before the morrow,
 Wait not through his season.
 Death does. What's the reason?
 Ask my yellow fate.
 'Tis too late.

THE DAY'S FUNERAL.

The sun was lost beyond the dark brown hill,
 Too late it was to see his face again.
 A great bird with a cry long-drawn and shrill,
 And flying low and slow,
 Swept past me, plunging with a wild thing's ken
 Into the shadows, left of friend and foe.

And after him on swift, uncertain wing,
 A piping flutterer followed from the West,
 With sweet, unfinished strains, yet prone to sing
 A note 'twixt fear and cheer.
 The night winds' waves that rolled beneath his
 breast
 Tided his tremulous calls for me to hear.

Soon after them a moth went glimmering by,
 Oblivious of the daylight almost spent,
 White, silent traveler towards the moon on high,
 Making its ray his way.
 To the meek and glistening grass my head I bent:
 It was the funeral of a summer's day.

IN KIND OCTOBER.

In kind October when the trees turned gold,
And summer roses marked no more the way,
Thou cam'st instead of flowers we could not hold
To keep the round year rosy night and day.
Now bloom, thou southern rose,
Nor fear thee
For any wind that blows
While we are near thee.
If fields grow chill, and cheer from heaven
departs,
We'll take thee in and sun thee in our hearts.
Thou flower-like spirit, dost suit the season's
wealth,
Its harvests fair of grape and grain and song.
Here 'mid the sheaves and wine I pledge thy
health,
Time fill thy garner! joy to thee belong!
And while we sing our strain
In autumn hours,
May all the birds come back again,
And all the flowers
With beauty of thy presence and delight,
To make me dream thee standing in my sight.

A VOICE IN NOVEMBER.

The time I heard thy voice sweet hopes unfold
There might have been no blight for aught I
knew.
Perchance the leaden hills for once were gold,
And all the sharp, salt seas were dimpling dew.

Life held no hapless choice;
 Grief and its fellow Discord both were still.
 And memories came with rare delight to fill
 My heart at thy sweet voice.

Departing Summer beat a bright retreat,
 And shot the landscape with a valiant green.
 Night brought again the glow-worm to my feet;
 There were no sad memorials to be seen.
 'Twas loyal to rejoice.
 Some sovereign presence came within my reach:
 Life seemed a happy melody to teach
 My heart at thy sweet voice.

And oh, cerulean skies to hold the sun!
 And oh, what lace of stars to cover dreams!
 Never such birds in flocks or one by one,
 Never such flowery fields, or rippling streams.
 Bravo! I cried, rejoice!
 Lo, chill November! gone were June and
 flower!
 What could have gained and lost them in an
 hour?
 My heart at thy sweet voice.

ON BOARD THE CRUISER "CHARLESTON."

Our souls, fair land, to thee are anchored fast:
 What were the freedom of the careless ocean,
 If not for thee to harbor us at last,
 And weigh our treasure by our hearts' devotion?

Our hearts' devotion take, beloved shore;
 Ye inland mountains, watch the mother's
 dwelling.;
 Be clear and steadfast when the breakers roar,
 And her dear heart with ocean's heart is swelling.

Thou land art home, albeit the winding sheet
 May swing us luckless to a deep-sea pillow;
 The grass-green miles beneath the landmen's feet
 Are fair to thought as is the trackless billow.
 The trackless billow hath no bounded State,
 For hopes of striving men no sure foundation:
 From Bedloe's light unto the Golden Gate
 Behold instead the sea-begotten nation!

Now far aloft we look across thy slopes
 Our jolly crew go singing to their duty.
 Though soon we sail away with seamen's hopes,
 A pledge we drink to praise our country's
 beauty:
 Our country's beauty hath not any peer.
 Flag of our hearts, to all the flags commend her!
 And may the sky shine down a happy year,
 While we afar are ready to defend her.

And mates ashore, delay ye not to call
 For faith of blood or gold to save her glory.
 If danger threaten, let us gather all,
 And as we triumph, make a cheer her story!
 A cheer her story! let the chorus ring
 Until the heavens thunder back above her:
 And for your sailor's joy the waves will sing
 In every port he is his country's lover.

ST. CECILIA.

Lend me thy name, thou patron of sweet sounds,
 That here where blend life's dimness and its
 glory,
 Where heavens and earth have like horizon
 bounds,
 Each season of my story
 May suit its music to the skies
 As well as earth where half its landscape lies.

Song needs the concord that the blessed know,
 To make men feel high kinship by the singing.
 While burdened feet on earth pass to and fro,
 May spirits above us winging
 Their flight supreme o'er land and sea,
 Confirm our hearts' entranced ministry.

THE STRANGER'S INVOCATION BEFORE
 THE BUST OF LANIER.

Chorister, look down upon me, till this bronzed
 fancy soften,
 Till the entranced face wake to bless me with
 a happy friendship's birth,
 Till the luminous eyes shall hold me as kind eyes
 that watch me often,
 Till you seem unknown no more in heaven to
 me unknown on earth.

Had your face the unspoken answers of the friend
that I would make you?

Was the living man impassioned with the body
of my dream—

Like your music, just the promise of yourself
which made men take you

As that minstrel who would only sing the being
he could seem?

Is it now too long a quiet since your last soft
breath was taken,

Here to hope for salutation from that lordly soul
of song?

Must I smother my desire to see a tender smile
awaken,

And the poet's head nod gently to the dream-
enchanted throng?

Is the chance of knowing finished by the one
short turn of dying,

While the lapsing years fit sadly here to bring
to us our own?

If I spoke your name out warmly towards the
vastness there outlying,

Would your spirit for an answer turn a little
from the throne?

Why should men decry the human? Would your
soul enjoy disowning

That large heart which nursed its fever into
such inspiring flame?

All the body's throbs of feeling in the laughter
and the moaning—

Do you scorn the lost mortality, yet own the
song and name?

We have saved the happy music, but have lost the
poet's passion,

We have tokens of the pageant, but the hero
has gone by;

They have fixed the dreamer's vision here in
loving, deathless fashion—

Oh! for one swift greeting movement of the liv-
ing poet's eye.

Have we lost the best, our poet, we who never
even saw you,

Ere like some strange star you vanished, radi-
ant wonder to man's eye,

Never heard you voice the music of the beauty
that could draw you

Far above ignoble fretting, till you half forgot
to sigh?

Did you give your years all joyfully, a musical
surrender,

Just a breathing in of Heaven's air to carol
it away?

Heart beneficent and generous, a gracious spirit-
lender,

Glad to make the winds your messengers to
solace with your lay.

For we think so; and we wonder what more pas-
sion would be given

To the treasures you have left us, had we seen
you face to face?

Not to hold you mutely, blindly, in a friend's
forbearance shriven,

But to attune your song's recital to the soul
that gave it grace.

For you stood as true-love's bondsman in the
 lyric's warmest wooing,

Put your pride into the cloister of the bars
 that bind an ode,

And in trust gave over lovingly—such favor never
 ruing—

To the keeping of the Symphony, your heart
 and all its load.

In the open of your pages—banners waving,
 trumpets blowing—

You were taken as a hostage for the world's
 sublimer sway:

And to strange far courts of fantasy a princely
 singer going,

Still you sang of home and sorrows, laureate
 lover far away.

All the music you set ringing has its breathing
 pauses in it;

And your heart had chimes that sounded on,
 the while your voice was still;

We aspire to catch the cadence too, but how shall
 we begin it,

We who lack your spirit's echo, and who want
 the minstrel's will?

There is something after song, some little trill
 that starts and falters,

Some quick overflow of changing tears, that
 words can never hold;

If we find this holy witness, silent by the soul's
 good altars,

We shall know the singer best by what the song
 could not unfold.

Though I sing and sing again your song, and
 praise, and hear men praise you,
 I shall sing it all expectantly, till some pro-
 founder voice
 Wake and join the strain with perfect power and
 in its climax raise you
 On the words into my heart. So shall I know
 you, and rejoice.

TIMROD.

The songs thou gav'st go winding down the street
 In tuneful memories of white-haired men,
 And lisplings of young voices—sweet more sweet—
 Thy Spring too comes to us again—again.

Mark the old gables of our houses here,
 And grey-grown monuments, heirlooms of
 deeds,
 And wave-worn, sandy shore-line, and the pier,
 Old charter-landmarks, harbors, churches,
 creeds—

Out come they at the turnings of thy song:
 For at thy notes, a thrill as of the breeze
 O'er ripening rice-fields lightly hies along,
 And moves the old tokens in their honored ease.

What came of that alembic pure of mould,
 Whence issued mist for April and the sea,
 And flames for love and June and soldiers bold,
 And silver, gold, and blue for heavens to thee?

What said that proud liege-lord of faery, Keats,
 Of charmed vistas of our Southern day,
 Of classic haze our weather oft repeats,
 With rose-bedecked December mild as May?

No alien Meccas drew thee from thy way:
 Thou found'st thy shrine upon thine own dear
 soil.

Thy heart's fond hope it was to match thy lay
 To measures of thy neighbors' rest and toil.

Nor did the compass of Ulysses' years,
 Nor a Columbian treasure-trove of land,
 Bring thee the vantage of the hemispheres,
 To scan the pole or equatorial strand:

Fixed like a native and provincial flower,
 The rare upgrowth of thy young hopes we prize.
 Thou of our days hast sweetened every hour:
 Thy blushing fields are wedded to our eyes.

Tracking the poet's music to its springs,
 We find it oft a rill in some retreat
 Known to lone hunters, and the glad, wild things
 That need no crowd's acclaim to prove it sweet.

Far short of thy rich song are flower and stream.
 In the fair soul thy labyrinths are laid:
 Of virtue's presence there we catch the gleam—
 For virtue's echo was thy music made.

And when we bring thy cadences to court,
 And hold thy mantle by the purple robe,
 With royal spirits may'st thou well comport,
 Thy hands should clasp the hands that rule
 the globe.

Hark! while pure lips repeat thy wonders now.
 More of thy hopes in maiden breasts we seek.
 Who loves his home puts chaplets on thy brow,
 He praises thee who kisses love's warm cheek.

* FOR LIFE'S BEST.

A maiden's home of thought, built for Life's Best
 Where soul doth take the body for its guest,
 Dispensing such an hospitality,
 That hands and feet grow soulful in the quest
 Of gathering favors for this inner worth—
 That is the very heavenliest thing on earth;
 That gives the sparkling eye and glowing cheek,
 The gentle touch, that wand which dowers the
 meek;
 Patience divine, that worketh and waiteth long;
 The angel's smile on angel-lips of song.

What crystal draughts these fountains may afford,
 What purest viands deck the snowy board,
 When Virtue sups with Hope, and smiling Health,
 Wearing plain ribbons or the gems of wealth,
 Breaks the light loaf, and welcomes Happiness
 With salads fresh and cool from the brooklet's
 cress!

What gleaming fires may light the alcove's gloom,
 And make a sanctuary of each room,
 To house our sisters who shall entertain
 Earth's mightiest and their works of heart and
 brain,

*At the laying of the corner-stone of Winthrop College
 for Women.

And turn them to new furtherance of power,
 Filling with festivals each fleeting hour!
 King's Mountain hearkening to Catawba's flow-
 ing,

When from the sea the wind is inland blowing,
 Will hear sweet strains of caroling and laughter,
 And trust no battle-storm will thunder after.

Such harbors of deep peace along the way
 Rose not full-mantled in a little day.
 For many centuries of anxious thought
 Have architects and counsellors had dreams,
 And had their doubts, and failed to rear such
 walls,

Or give the women freedom of such halls.
 But out of waiting was the fiat wrought;
 Now on the rock-built fact the sunlight beams.

Here is the foot-print of Success,

Here will he come, and stay to bless;
 And here will rise his tent, nor shall it fade away
 With the next dawn, and leave the old listless day.
 Here pledge we it to stand,
 While this old State may gather from the land
 The bright-eyed pilgrims who would pass
 Through the wide portals into rarer light,
 To look upon the world with gladdened sight,
 See other worlds as through untarnished glass.

Those whom we know laid these foundations deep;
 Those whom we know will swing that roof-tree
 there;

Nor will they turn aside to sleep,
 But wait within with counsel and with prayer,
 To make the household than the house more fair.

Laureates they are that make the earth
 The spirit's harp, and draw forth mirth
 That leaves no listening ones in need;
 Life's fond musicians of the better part,
 Who set a sweet wish with a loving deed
 Singing with wisdom in a girl's glad heart.

We know that often in the world's long years
 Freedom hath fed on alms, and hath been free;
 Wisdom hath supped with beggars—for a crust
 Honor hath bowed, and kept its crest from dust,
 While Virtue lonely fed upon her fears.
 Here otherwise to-day—and this we sing:
 From other realms the deathless Peabody
 Clasps hands with living Winthrop to decree
 A gift of loving trust that soon shall bring
 A great estate to magnify a king.
 The brotherly foreseeing banker is he
 Who hath the faith to put a share of gold
 Out to such fair celestial usury
 As time may bring him from a woman's heart—
 A gain of holy blessings manifold,
 Ne'er to be lost in any treacherous mart.
 What man can measure or foretell
 The halcyon light and halo that will shine
 From one girl's life upon my fate and thine
 If she have privilege to ponder well
 The great face that the lordly day
 Turns toward her with his mystery?
 What better keeper of radiance leaveth he
 When he hath gone upon his spacious way?
 Can fire-tipped spires that seek the azure skies
 So point the thought to heights of hope and power,
 So pledge the future with a virtuous hour,

As light from great-souled women's eyes?
 They know the paths by which our spirits came,
 They dream of havens where our home shall be;
 And watch by our altars with the vestal's flame,
 To peer into the vast eternity.

There is one narrow gate
 Through which each woman passes soon or late;
 And if there be an obolus of thought,
 By which that august passage may be wrought
 With peace and strength of soul,
 Shall man refuse to put the dole
 Within the slender hand, and cry,
 Thou need'st the mite as well as I?
 What matter if it be minted from the gold
 Of trembling stars, or wind-blown yellow flower,
 From nurselings' locks or from the earth's rude
 breast,
 If it be but the best?
 It may be new or old,
 But in its circle it must hold
 Our very rarest purchase power.

Portia for me!
 Not just the wise and winning heart
 Who dwelt in Avon's fathering sovereignty,
 But my fair neighbor, whosoe'er she be,
 That in all love and wisdom takes her part
 To make sweet music out of warring laws,
 And read my brother's in my own fond cause;
 Whose hour on hour of hearty living
 Is haunted by the secret—oh, how rare!—
 Of being ever wiser, better, sweeter;

Out of fair yesterday, with fostering care,
 Making the instant day more fair.
 For amply clothed is she in grace of giving,
 And queenly garnerings hath her life to share;
 And with a carrying than the wild-bird's fleeter
 She hastes to where the hopes are worth the sav-
 ing,
 And drops the balm that quiets sorrow's craving.

The mothering birthright hid in girlhood's breast
 Enriches every work by which we are blest.

What makes the surgeon's blade so keen
 And sure, to cleave our woes between,
 As that high sympathy that knows the pain,
 Yet lends the serious service not in vain?
 What so may nurse the childish vague desire
 To learn the story of the rainbow's building?
 Or catch the magic of the sunshine's gilding?
 Or see Dame Nature hiding in the fire?
 This makes adroit and quick the little hand
 To grasp the flying world on which we stand.
 The maiden's thought that in the years gone by
 Did brood about the distaff, now still blesses
 Her loved ones, and her fingers ply
 To weave with larger means the garb that dresses
 In finer folds the old-time human needs.
 The newer wisdom, strengthening woman's deeds,
 Shall not make barer waking, poorer sleeping,
 To ruin mirth, or swell the voice of weeping.
 Industrial ideal! to make the home
 Sweet as the bee's, that's built o' the honeycomb.

The dedication of this house we sing;
 Our daughters from a blithesome youth to bring

To warmer splendor, womanly and strong,
 Whose lightest hope shall prelude noble song,
 Whose every deed shall seem a victory,
 Not won upon a mate's distress,
 But crowned with glory that may bless
 All weakling faith, and stay the growth of wrong.
 Safe be this castle set upon a hill,
 To float its harmonies abroad, and fill
 The echoing horizon, till each year
 Give woman for all doubt of life its cheer.

THE SOLDIER'S BURIAL.*

Make room for the soldier's long years' rest.

 The rumble of the muttering drum,
 Or ring of rifles o'er his breast,
 Or murmuring crowds that go or come,
 Will never wake him from his sleep:
 For his sleep is deep.

Enter the town what way you will,
 And all to one sad goal are bound;
 The warm hearts march with the heart that's still
 To the hero's final camping-ground.
 They turn from warehouse, bond and fee,
 And let traffic be.

Hail to the thin grey veteran line
 That came with all the winds to moan,
 And meet beside him at the sign
 Of sovereign mystery each had known
 As marksman sure for friend or foe
 In the long ago.

*At Barnwell, S. C., Jan. 6th, 1898.

Do they vouchsafe him not a word?

'Tis time to stand, be still, and grieve.

For quick defense not one has stirred:

No tried reserves can now relieve,

While brave men's tears flow fast and free

And the children see.

Lay on the flowers and laurel wreath,

And lean the old flag on his bier.

Winter is kind to him beneath,

And with the sunshine drops the tear.

Her stately pines will guard the mound,

While the years roll round.

And while the years roll round the breeze

From every point will come to sing

The soldier's requiem through the trees.

And snow-white fields or bloom of spring

Will make the land of his love and care

A memorial fair.

A keeper of his flag was he,

And put aside the captor's hand.

And like his flag his word would be

The symbol of his soul's command.

The graces of his heart and head

In his deeds were said

Who charged thro' martial voice and eye

That States be strong and men be men,

Whose sword did Ruin's self defy,

Who fixed law's fiat with his pen,

Failed not at the retreating breath

In the truce with death.

Peace to the soldier! proud to dare
 The terrors of the blinding strife
 For household rights that all may share,
 And truth that is the life of life.
 Peace! let men's word of him be true,
 And their silence too.

APPROPRIATION.

An epic dream of love and clashing arms
 I sang to please the world, but all in vain.
 I sang it over, deepening all the pain,
 Ringing love's laughter and her peerless charms.

They would not hear: they fought for towns
 and farms.

Each had his love, and by her fond disdain
 Measured his anguish. So my storied strain
 Hushed like a song-bird's lost amid alarms.

One brighter day I tuned my heart to send
 A tender soul who moved not with the throng
 Some joyful staves wherein we might commune.

They caught the cheer, considered not my friend.
 "The meed is ours," they cried. "Who wrote
 the song?
 He thought of us; he shall be crowned at
 noon."

LULLABY

I swing in the hammock with thee, my dear,
 'Neath the wings of the angels that hover near.

The clouds with the tree-tops play to and fro—

Oh, lullaby low.

To sleep let us go,

Aswing in the hammock together, my own,
 While murmurs the zephyr in fondling tone

A lullaby low.

At peace on my breast wouldst thou hush me,
 dear,

And charm me asleep, heaven's songs to hear?

The travelers go by us on faint tiptoe—

Oh, lullaby low.

To sleep let us go,

Aswing in the hammock together, my sweet,
 While love in my heart makes my lips repeat

A lullaby low.

My babe, as I love thee, so let me keep

My longing to follow thee even in sleep—

Come, heavenly forms, in the golden glow!

Oh, lullaby low.

To sleep let us go,

Aswing in the hammock together, my child,
 While flows with the tide of thy breathing mild

A lullaby low.

Thy little arm over my cheek, my dear,

And naught from the great open sky to fear,

God cradles us both, rocking soft and slow—

Oh, lullaby low.

To sleep let us go,
 Aswing in the hammock together, my love,
 While I o'er thy slumbering croon as a dove
 A lullaby low.

NOCTURNE.

Love, let me wake thee from thy slumber,
 And let me tell thee for an hour
 My treasured thoughts that do outnumber
 Thy store of dreams and fairies' dower.
 Now by thine own bright star above thee,
 I love thee—let me sing aloud—I love thee;
 And by each star throughout the darkness
 gleaming,
 I tell thee o'er and o'er, awake or dreaming,
 I love thee, love, I love thee, and I love thee!

A song-bird wakes to join in calling—
 Dost thou not hear his rhapsody?
 The silver stars from heaven are falling,
 And there's a murmur from the sea.
 'Tis not to have thee hear my note of sorrow—
 For by the sun thou shalt be fair to-morrow—
 But out of joy here in the dark to call thee,
 And pray no ghost of danger may befall thee,
 And tell thee that I love thee, and I love thee.

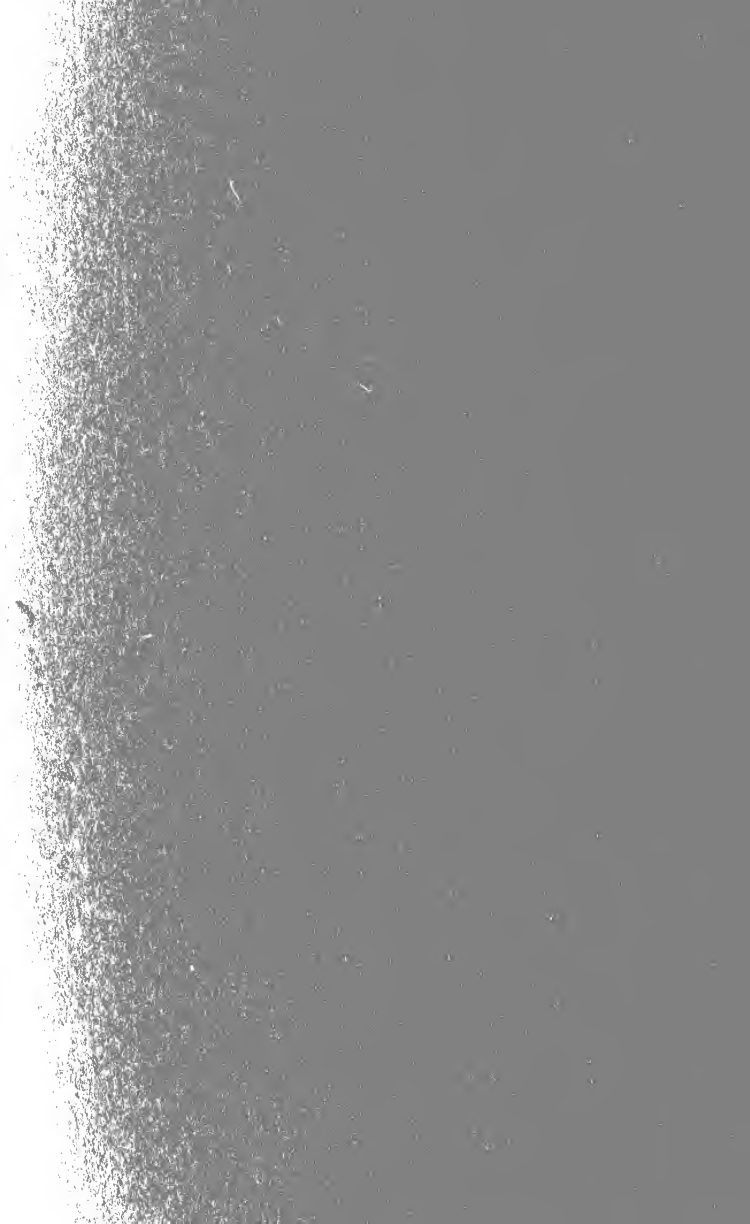
CADENZA.

My thought may sing itself to-day and die,
And on a breath its frail, ethereal form
Move nightward with the moth that flutters by.

If one good listener's heart continue warm
Toward lives kept pure and beauty that is
fraught
With cheer for those who struggle through the
storm,

No winged grace in clearest amber caught,
Nor maiden mirrored on an Attic urn,
Will be as safe as my embalmed thought.

No messenger to tell me may return ;
But if it find your heart, and buried lie,
If its refrain for requiem you learn,
My thought may sing itself to-day and die.



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